

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



Office of Public Information

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CLIFFORD W. TAYLOR IS NEW CHIEF JUSTICE OF MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT

LANSING, MI, January 6, 2005 – Clifford W. Taylor is the new Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, the Court has announced. He was chosen by his fellow Justices at a conference earlier today. The seven Justices voted 6-1 to elect Taylor, with Justice Elizabeth A. Weaver dissenting.

Every two years, the Justices elect one of their colleagues to serve as Chief Justice for a term of two years. According to the Court's custom, a Chief Justice generally serves no more than two consecutive two-year terms.

Taylor thanked his colleagues, saying he was "both humbled and profoundly honored by their choice of me as Chief Justice. I will strive every day to merit their confidence and carry on the best traditions of the Chief Justices who preceded me."

Taylor also praised outgoing Chief Justice Maura D. Corrigan, who served four years as Chief Justice, beginning in January 2001.

"She is an exemplary steward of the public trust, and she has had a lasting impact for good, particularly in the arena of child welfare," he said. "She has saved Michigan taxpayers millions of dollars by leading a successful conversion to a statewide child support enforcement computer system, as just one example."

Taylor, a native of Flint, received his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan and his law degree from George Washington University. After three years in the U.S. Navy as a line officer, he returned to Michigan and served as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Ingham County. In 1972, he joined the Lansing law firm of Denfield, Timmer and Seelye, which later became Denfield, Timmer & Taylor when Taylor became a partner in the firm. He remained in private practice for 20 years until his 1992 appointment to the Michigan Court of Appeals by Governor John Engler.

In August 1997, Engler appointed Taylor to the Michigan Supreme Court to fill the seat vacated by retired Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley. In 1998, Taylor ran and was elected to fill the balance of Riley's term. Taylor was re-elected to a full eight-year term in 2000.

Taylor's professional activities include serving on the Michigan State Board of Law Examiners, of which he was president from 1995-1996. He has served on the Michigan State Bar's Standing Committee on Character and Fitness and the Commission on the Courts in the 21st Century. A fellow of the Michigan State Bar Foundation, he is also a member of the Catholic Lawyers Guild and the Federalist Society's Michigan Chapter. His community activities include having served as a leader in the Boy Scouts; he is also a board member of the Michigan Dyslexia Institute.

Taylor resides in Laingsburg with his wife, Lucille.

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